RAY PRESENTS

THE last round-up of the Canadian Picture Pioneers boosts the list up to 105. In order to exclude no pioneer, whose application has reached the Executive of the Canadian Picture Pioneers on or before April 17th., all these Pioneers will become Life Members. Now, we are ready for the ordinary members who may register at any time, the initiation fee is five dollars and the annual dues one dollar. Life memberships are ten dollars.

The Royal York Hotel, May 1st, is the setting for the first big meeting. Registration at 2 P.M., business meeting at 3.30, cocktails at 5.30, dinner at 7.30 and the big surprise show around nine o'clock. The entertainment committee has been on the job for a month making and completing their arrangements. It looks as if the Pioneers will have the time of their young life. I am glad to see that I am not to do a Sarah Bernhardt solo stunt by being the only woman pioneer, for Mrs. B. K. Moore of Grimsby, Ontario, has joined up as a life member. Welcome Mrs. Moore. I hope we two female pioneers do not cramp the boy's style, so by way of dispelling their fears, may we mention as women pioneers, "we can take it". They say a woman hates to tell her age, I offer no argument, but it may be that Mrs. Moore and I came from the mountains and were wedded to the motion picture industry as Infants. Be that as it may, leave your crutches at home and toddle to the Royal York Hotel May 1st. A woman is no longer as old as she looks, the lipstick on the white collars of gentlemen can testify to that fact, not overlooking the powder on his coat lapel; as for the adage of a "man is as old as he feels" we guarantee you are going to feel good at the big Canadian Picture Pioneers meeting, dinner and show; and that you will leave feeling ten years younger.

PACK up the toothbrush, the white collar and tie if you want to be swanky, otherwise come in your overalls, your object in coming is to enjoy yourself, to swap stories with the other Canadian Picture Pioneers. The entertainment committee's business is to make you happy, come in that mood. Forget your business, remember only that you have been in motion pictures for twenty-five years and still going strong.

In glancing over the list, I see Jules Bernstein "Bernie" of Loew's, Toronto. I'll say he is eligible. My old friend, George Rotsky, Hello George, and Simon Meretsky. But, more about Simon later on. "Bob" R. A. Scott of Lyric, Vancouver, B.C.; W. Ray Johnston and George B. West of Monogram, N.Y.C.; Harrison R. Patte, Toronto, Pete Harrison, Capitol, Cobourg, Ont.; J. A. "Add" Wilson, Christie Theatre, Toronto; Bill Hansher, Paramount Films, Vancouver; Harry Law, Vitagraph Ltd., Toronto; Henry Morton, Garrick Theatre, Winnipeg; J. R. Stewart, Lyric Theatre, Hamilton; Fred Gregor, Majestic Theatre, New Waterford, N.S. and Roland F. Keil, Strand Theatre, Edmonton. And now for the Simon Meretsky story. He writes, "Dear Miss Lewis; Enclosed you will find ten dollars for membership. I hope some day you will get all the people together who have been in the business for twenty-five years or more and have a banquet at the Royal York or King Edward with the money.

"I came into the business in 1914. Mr. Jim Arkus walked into my scrap iron yard one day and told me that the Windsor Theatre was for sale. I told him I had never been inside of same. He said, 'It cost $100,000. The stockholders are fighting and you can buy same for $75,000'. I told him that if I could get it for $40,000, I would buy it even if it was losing money. He came back and said he could get it for $60,000. I bought it for $50,000 and paid cash. I did not know anything about the show business. In fact, I know more about what is going on in heaven than what I knew about show business then. After I bought the theatre on a Thursday, I said to Mr. Arkus, 'What do you do for pictures?' and he said, 'I don't know; I never bought any'. I asked him who he dealt with and he said Mr. O'Connor who worked for Pathe Exchange.

"I CALLED Mr. O'Connor and told him that I had bought the theatre and would be in the market for pictures. He said to me, I have a good picture which I will sell to you for $30 for three days'. The name of the picture was 'Sirens of the Sea'. It came out in the paper that Simon Meretsky had bought the Windsor Theatre and the policy would be changed. The picture did so much that I called up Mr. O'Connor and told him I would keep it for three days more. He charged me $40 for the second three days.

It spread in Toronto that I had bought the theatre, and the Siamese twins Sammy Glazer and Jake Berman came to see me. They had not been in the office one minute when I asked them about Chaplin. They said that Clyde Curry in the Favourite Theatre plays them. Jake Berman told me they were getting $50 apiece for them. He said that if I would pay $75.00 it would be all right. I told him that I would take the four of them at $75.00. He went over to the Favourite and when he came back he said he could get $150 for them. So I offered him $200. When he came back again he had a contract for $250, so I bought them for $300.

"Did I know what I was doing? I did not, but it turned out very big. Eventually I started to play them, and I had to have an adding machine to count the money I made with same. Some of them were two-reelers and some were three-reelers, if I recollect right.

"THEN my troubles began. I began to deal with Phil Kaufman. Not only did he take off all my wool, but he sheared me so close that my flesh was bleeding. I only bought once from him, he never sold to me again. He sent over a fellow named Fisher. He was a very fine fellow. Of course they were Loew's pictures at that time. I also used to deal with a fine fellow named O'Connor who was also with Loews' pictures. Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Henry Nathanson used to spend two or three days with me in Windsor.

"I always invited all the boys to my house for schnapps and gefulte fish Friday night. From Fox, Leo Devaney used to come to see me. He made it his business to be at my place on

(Continued on Page 6)

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CIRCUIT CONVENTION

Calgary, Alta. — Members of the Sharp Circuit, operating a dozen theatres at Alberta country points, joined with the Calgary office of the Sharp organization at a recent convention here. Convention lasted two days and included a luncheon, an evening banquet, and screenings of "Pinocchio" and "Swiss Family Robinson".

NET PROFIT UP

Vancouver, B.C. — General Theatre Investment Co. reports a net profit for past year of $103,974 compared with $49,911 in 1938. The company owns seven theatres in Vancouver, all of which are leased and operated by famous Players Canadian Corporation.

GUESTS HOCKEY TEAM

Regina, Sask. — When the Port Arthur Bearcats hockey team came to Regina for the playoffs with Moose Jaw, Charlie Bahrynowski was right on hand to welcome the boys and invite them over to his theatre, the Met, to see the picture as his guests. Charlie, when manager of the Royal, Fort William, Ontario, the adjoining city, was president of the hockey club there.

TOURIST BUREAU FILM

New York, N.Y. — "By Way of New France" a short motion picture produced by Associated Screen Studios for the Province of Quebec Tourist Bureau, was well received in New York City this week.

"IT'S A DATE" 5th WEEK

New York, N.Y. — Universal's "It's A Date", the seventh Deanna Durbin film produced by Joe Pasternak, has been held over for a fifth week at the Rivoli Theatre here.

GABRIEL HESS PASSES

New York, N.Y. — Friends mourn the passing of Gabriel L. Hess, General Attorney for the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America for the past sixteen years.

"SLIM" GORDON PRESIDENT

Regina, Sask. — Slim Gordon, projectionist at the Capitol Theatre, has been elected president of the Commercial 10-pin Bowling League here.

War Conditions May Bolster British Columbia Box Office

LUMBERING BENEFITS - TOURIST INCREASE LIKELY

Vancouver, B.C. — Theatre business, which is already healthier on the west coast than in most other sections of Canada, will probably be hypoed to further vigour by the recent, dramatic turmoil in the Scandinavian countries. On the face this seems a far-fetched prediction but when explained, as it was in a recent interview by Frank H. Gow, suburban supervisor for Famous Players in British Columbia, it becomes not only plausible but probable.

The backbone of British Columbia wealth, this alert, long-sighted showman explained, is the lumbering industry. Until recently the Scandanavia has been a strong, and fortunately situated, competitor in the world market. But now, engaged in the struggle for self-preservation, the Nordic countries have been at least temporarily removed from competition. The demand for B.C. lumber will be highly stimulated and as goes the lumbering industry, so goes show business, is the way Mr. Gow views the situation.

The one serious drawback he forsees is the lack of sufficient ships to carry the lumber. The industry is already being retarded by the scarcity of sea-going freighters but Mr. Gow expects, and it is generally anticipated by other business men, that the demand for lumber will become so heavy that necessity will force the solution to this problem.

Tourist Trade

A further stimulus to the box-office will probably come in the form of increased tourist trade. In the past, Mr. Gow pointed out, B.C. has experienced little of the mid-summer slack felt elsewhere in the Dominion. The influx of tourists tends to keep conditions fairly constant. There should be no dropping off of tourists this year, rather there should be a decided increase. Canada, although at war, is safe country to visit and the exchange rates are extremely favourable to American vacationers.

No 16mm. Threat

Dealing briefly with the question of competition from 16mm. exhibitors in B.C., Mr. Gow said it was not serious nor was it likely to be in the future. The provincial laws, he said, prevented an itinerant from showing his product within twelve miles of a fully licensed house. Since 16mm. men seldom showed more than one or two nights a week in each town, they naturally operate on itinerant licenses, so have little affect on already established theatres.

POSSIBLE DIVIDENDS

Toronto, Ont. — Shareholders of Eastern Theatres Ltd. were told at their annual meeting that resumption of common dividend payments were possible during this year. It was also reported that business during the first quarter showed a substantial improvement over the corresponding period in 1939.

SPECIAL SATURDAY PROGRAMS PLEASE JUVENILE TRADE

Vancouver B.C. — Special Saturday programs aimed specifically at the juvenile trade are packing Famous Players suburban houses in Vancouver. The programs, as outlined by Harry Creasey, manager of the Alma Theatre, base their drawing power more on solid value than novelty. Along with the feature, a serial and special shorts and cartoons are screened and to add spice a junior quiz contest is held during which small prizes are awarded to the always-grateful contestants.

Mr. Creasey, who played a large part in developing the scheme, finds it a twofold blessing. It guarantees good weekend matinees and also promotes neighborhood goodwill. He finds that parents are warmly appreciative of any special effort made to entertain their children.

TORONTO BUSINESS UP

Toronto, Ont. — Theatre business is reported as much better in Toronto this week. Managers went through a bad week last week, with the playoffs of the hockey league keeping patrons glued to the radio or at the arena.

"REBECCA" TERRIFIC!

New York, N.Y. — David O. Selznick's "Rebecca" has been held over for the fourth week at Radio City Music Hall. In the entire history of the Radio City Music Hall, "Rebecca" is the second picture to run a fourth week, the only other film being "Snow White".

"Rebecca", is doing a terrific business at the Uptown Theatre, Toronto.

DONNELLY PURCHASING AGENT

Montreal, Que.—Mr. B. E. Norrish announces the appointment of Mr. H. H. Donnelly as purchasing agent for Associated Screen News. Mr. Donnelly has been associated with the company for many years and until his new appointment has been connected with the commercial photography department.

GOLDHAR PROUD FATHER

Toronto, Ont. — Barney Goldhar, joint operator of the Bloordale and Paramount Theatres here, is now the very proud father of a baby girl.

20th Century-Fox Promises 52 Features for 1940-41

52 ONE-REEL FILMS AND 104 MOVIETONE NEWS

Chicago, Ill. — Fifty-two feature pictures are planned for release next season by 20th Century-Fox Film Corp., it was announced by General Manager of Distribution, Herman Wobber, at the company's annual sales convention at the Drake Hotel. The company will also release 52 one-reel films and 104 issues of Movietone News.

Among those pictures now being prepared for early production are:

"Brigham Young", now before the cameras with a stellar cast composed of Tyrone Power, Dean Jagger, Linda Darnell, Jane Darwell, Mary Astor, John Carradine, Vincent Price, Brian Donlevy, Ann Todd and Fuzzy Knight. Henry Hathaway will direct from the story of the great Mormon leader by Louis Bromfield.

"The Great Commandment", a vast spectacle curiously paralleling the happenings of today, as it relates the drama of a crushed and helpless people during the days of Christ, and their attempts to throw off the Roman yoke. Tyrone Power will star.

"Down to the Sea In Ships", a drama of whaling days. Picture to have an all-star cast and to be produced on a big scale.

"The Great Profile", a story gleaned from the front pages of the newspapers, in which Adolphe Menjou will star.

"I Married A Nazi", a daring expose of life in the Third Reich of an American wife of a Nazi.

"The Return of Frank James", to be produced in Technicolor, with Henry Fonda starred.

"Elsa Maxwell's Public Deb No. 1", a story of a spoiled daughter of the rich. Starring Brenda Joyce, with George Murphy, Mischa Auer, Ralph Bellamy and Maxie Rosenbloom.

"Down Argentine Way", another Technicolor feature. Carmen Miranda will star, with South America the background.

"Young People", a picture that parallels Shirley Temple's own sensational success story. Film already in production with Jack Oakie, Charlotte Greenwood, George Montgomery and Arleen Whelan supporting Shirley Temple in the cast.

"Fifth Avenue", an adaptation of a new novel by Polan Banks, "Manhattan Holiday".

Story Material

Other stories from which the 52 features will be chosen include the following:

"How Green Was My Valley", Richard Llewellyn's best selling novel, "For Beauty's Sake", by Clarence Buddington Kelland, "Western Union", a Zane Grey novel, "Brooklyn Bridge", "The Californian", "One Man Army", "Song Of The Islands", "The Khyber Pass", "Brothers", "Red Cross Nurse", "Down On The Wabash", "Yesterday's Heroes", "Shadows In The Snow", "Hudson's Bay Company", "Belle Starr", Irving Berlin's "Say It With Music", Louis Bromfield's "Marching As To War", "Too Much For One Man", "Steinmetz, The Wizard", "Comrade Stalin", "Sun Valley", "The Great American Broadcast", "Uncensored", "Highway 66", "Miss Pilgrim's Progress", "Dance Hall", "Breach of Discipline", "Falling Star", "Strange Bedfellows" and "The Bride Wore Crutches".

Withers & Cisco Kid

In the additional twenty-six pictures which will make up the new season's program of fifty-two pictures will be four Jane Withers comedies, four Cisco Kid features starring Cesar Romero and four productions from the company's London studio. Other titles will be announced later.

Darryl Zanuck will be assisted in producing this program by Executive Producer Sol M. Wurtzel and Associate Producers Lucien Hubbard, Harry Joe Brown, Ralph Dietrich, Raymond Griffith, Fred Kohlmar, Nunnally Johnson, Gene Markey, Walter Morosco, Kenneth Macgowan and John Stone.

Stars & Players

Stars and featured players under contract to Twentieth Century-Fox, who will be seen in the above pictures include the following: Alice Faye, Tyrone Power, Don Ameche, Sonja Henie, Shirley Temple, Richard Greene, Henry Fonda, Jane Withers, Cesar Romero, Joan Davis, Brenda Joyce, Linda Darnell, Nancy Kelly, John Carradine, Lynn Bari, Jane Darwell, Charlotte Greenwood, Mary Beth Hughes, Ricardo Cortez, Chris-Pin Martin, George Sanders, Robert Shaw, George Montgomery, Marjorie Weaver, Arleen Whelan, Sidney Toler, Jean Rogers, Binnie Barnes, Katherine Aldridge, Ted North, John Payne, Ann Baxter, Dorris Bowdon, Mary Healy, Robert Lowery, Eddie Collins, Bob Conway, Joan Valerie, Frank Swan and Elyse Knox.

Directors

Directors under contract include: Otto Brower, David Burton, Irving Cummings, Allan Dwan, John Ford, Eugene Ford, Henry Hathaway, Henry King, Walter Lang, Fritz Lang, Archie Mayo, Irving Pichel and Gregory Ratoff.

The stories and scripts for the new season's pictures will be prepared by forty-three writers, the largest contract list in the history of the company. They include: Jack Andrews, Edwin Blum, Harold Buchman, Dana Burnet, Niven Busch, Robert Carson, Roy Chanslor, William Conselman, Jr., Irving Cummings, Jr., William Drake, Albert Duffy, Philip Dunne, Robert Ellis, Sam Engel, Don Ettlinger, Ruth Fasken, J. Taintor Foote, Jules Furthman, Oliver Garrett, Sam Hellman, Ethel Hill, Robert Hopkins, Lee Katz, Fidel La Barba, John Larkin, Hilary Lynn, Helen Logan, William Anthony McGuire, Frank S. Nugent, John O'Hara, Ernest Pascal, Liam O'Flaherty, Stanley Rauh, Sidney Sheldon, Milton Sperling, Lamar Trotti, Jack Vernon, Darrell Ware, Karl Tunberg, Helen Vincent, Robertson White and Lester Ziffren.

More Technicolor

An increased use of Technicolor in Twentieth Century-Fox short subjects was announced. Truman Talley, producer of Movietone News and Short Subjects, and his staff comprised of Lew Lehr, Lowell Thomas, Ed. Thorgersen, Edmund Deek and Vyvyan Donner, informed the convention of their plans.

On the 1940-41 short subject schedule there will be four single reel productions of "Lowell Thomas' Magic Carpet of Movietone" series. The first of these, "Land of Flowers" has already been filmed in Technicolor and it is expected that more will be made the same way.

"Sport Reviews"

The first of six "Ed Thorgersen's Sport Reviews", "Vacation Time", has already been photographed in Technicolor. And in view of the encouraging response to "Following the Hounds", the first Technicolor "Sports Review", which was part of this year's product, it has been decided to make at least half of this series in color next season.

Vyvyan Donner's Technicolor "Fashion Forecasts" will be four in number as in the past, and the company will also produce four "Adventures of a Newsreel Cameraman" and four Lew Lehr Comedies.

Two of the four "Father Hubbard's Alaskan Adventures", made in cooperation with the famous "Glacier Priest", "Eskimo Trails" and "Isle of Mysteries", are already far advanced in preparation for release and the remaining two of the series are being readied for production.

26 Terrytoons

A full half of the total of twenty-six Terrytoons made during the coming year will be in Technicolor. Paul Terry, their producer, told the convention. This is a greater use of color than Terry has made before, and indicates, he feels, an opportunity for more elaborate and profitable cartoons from his studio.

RAY PRESENTS

(*Continued from Page 3*)

Friday night to have gefulte fish and home-made bread. From Universal, Mr. Taylor came to see me for three to four days and brought one picture in a box. He would start out at $1,000 *and would finally end in getting* $50 *for same. All the boys at Paramount were fine fellows. Bill Bach and George Weeks gave me a picture without a price. I am the only man who ever got a picture from an exchange without a price. They asked for* $500 *and I laughed at them, but when I finished playing the picture I sent them* $500. *All of the managers since then including Phil Reisman, Morris Milligan and Jack Hunter are very fine fellows.*

"I did not play Warner Bros. pictures until the Allen Theatres changed hands. The first dealings I had with Warner Bros. was with Mr. Lyons, and I have been dealing with them ever since. There is a very nice fellow there now named Wolfe Cohen. What a wolf, woof-woof! Then there was Manny Brown at United Artists. Jesse James was a gentleman compared to him. At least he had a gun. Finally Jake Berman became his twin. What a team they were! Those were the good old days when all the boys came down to sell pictures and play pinochle. Jake Berman used to ask me to get silver from the bank so he could take it to Detroit and change it for American silver. They finally got a real manager and a swell fellow. His name is Haskell Masters. He may be hard to do business with, but I like him for the interest he takes in humanity.

"I HAD Hiram Abrahams and Charlie Chaplin down to the Capitol Theatre, Windsor. They sold me a picture called 'Robin Good', and the title certainly fit the picture. Mr. Abrahams got $2,500 for that picture from me. When signing the contract with him, I said, 'What if I lose money?', and he said he would refund it. I lost $535 on the week, sent him the statement, but never received the cheque. In those days we used to buy each picture as it came out. After that I did not buy any more pictures from him.

I had a lot of fun during the 25 years, and met a lot of fine people. Even if our friend Mr. Lightstone saw a man hanging on a tree, I think he would take the knife out of his pocket and cut the rope down.

"Last Saturday night we were playing 'Geronimo' in the Palace Theatre and a twelve-year-old boy hit a lady over the head with both hands. It happened to be Mrs. Meretsky's hairdresser. She was in there Saturday and the hairdresser said she had a headache. Mrs. Meretsky asked her what the matter was. She said she went to see 'Geronimo' and there was a small boy behind her who got so excited over the picture that he hit her on the head with both hands, and her head was still aching.

"During the 25 years I have had people doing their act and die right on the stage. I have also had several people die in their seats. They were taken out of the theatre and the rest of the people were none the wiser that anything had happened.

"I want to tell you of a funny experience I had. A couple of years ago we were playing 'These Three'. I happened to be sitting down, and there was a lady with an umbrella in her hand who got so excited over the picture that she was going to throw her umbrella at the villain on the screen. It slipped from her hand and fell in the aisle, which is a good thing because she may have hit someone in the eye with it.

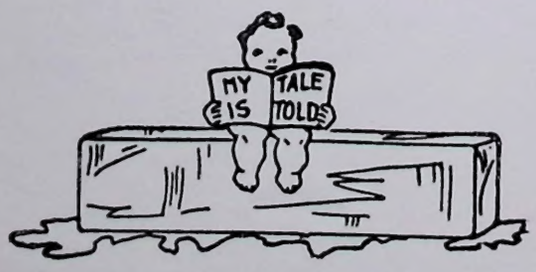
"I ALWAYS got along well with Columbia because they have Louis Rosenfeld there. I hope he stops laying on his stomach in the parlour at night so he won't get so many new ideas. Rust eats up iron — worry eats up the human body. If those fellows were only a little more lenient when contract season came around, we would live a lot longer. All in all, they are very fine fellows and I wish them all success and prosperity for their companies. I hope they will make good pictures so they can get big grosses.

"Columbia had a Convention at the Drake Hotel on or about last May. I sent Mr. Cohen at the Drake Hotel a telegram and said, 'Stop making murder pictures. Signed S. Meretsky.' They all shouted and voted unanimously that they were all in favour of making no more murder pictures. Columbia has better product this year because of Simon Meretsky's telegram.

"About twenty-five years ago, Alf Perry used to come down to sell me pictures. After he was in Windsor two or three days, he wouldn't stay any longer because I had already won his week's wages in pinochle. He was a glutton for punishment. He always came back for me, and he was certainly a Santa Claus for me. He used to holler then as he does now.

"Clair Hague is a fine boy. We always got along well together. Sam Brint is very nice also, and so is Harry Painter. I think he is getting better. Harry Bailey hollers sometimes, but his bark is much worse than his bite. I must mention Miss Wilson. I think she is one of the nicest ladies in Canada. She has a lot of business ability, and if she could wear a man's suit she would be holding the biggest position in the industry." Now you know what Simon thinks of you.

Welcome Pioneers, thanks for cheques and applications. See you Toronto, Royal York Hotel, May 1st. Watch for Pioneer Digest Number soon published and which will contain history of Canadian Picture Industry, together with Pioneer biographies and photos.



U-A's "Rebecca" Held-Over For Third Week, Uptown Theatre, Toronto